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Curbs on visit of Soviet scientist pit universities against U.S.

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San Francisco—The bitter dispute over how to end the loss of American technological secrets to the Soviet Union without infringing on academic freedom of research will reach a conference table in Washington this week.

Before a newly established high-level committee that mixes the defense and scientific establishments with academia will be an issue that already has caused controversy and anger on college campuses.

There has been mounting federal concern that the Russian arms build-up was being aided by what Adm. Bobby R. Inman, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has called "a hemorrhage of the country's technology." But last month it became focused in the case of a Soviet engineer scheduled to visit Stanford University.

The State Department ordered that the activities of Dr. Nikolai V. Umnov, an expert on robot development, be severely restricted during his visits to four universities. That triggered rebellion by university officials.

There were flat refusals at Stanford and the University of Wisconsin to enforce the State Department restrictions, which would have required the universities to police Dr. Umnov's activities. Of the other two, Auburn University had agreed to abide by the restrictions, and Ohio State University had reduced the time of the proposed visit to three days.

A joint letter to the administration, signed by Stanford President Donald Kennedy, David Saxon, president of the University of California, and the presidents of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the California Institute of Technology, expressed "grave concern" over federal efforts to apply export controls to teaching and research.

The State Department retreated from its position regarding Dr. Umnov, stipulating only that he should not have access to Department of Defense operations or visit American industries.

That cleared the way for the Russian to make his scheduled three-month visit to the United States, to begin next month, but it was far from the end of the disagreement between the government and the universities over the handling of the exchange of scientific information.

"We cannot operate encumbered by bureaucratic secrecy," declared Dr. Robert Rosenzweig, a Stanford vice president who contended that the United States was liable to lose more than it would gain by imposing restrictions on the academic community.

"We would lose the ability to run our scientific apparatus creatively," said Dr. Rosenzweig. "It is a mistake to assume that you can selectively close down what is now a free and open society."

It was easy, he observed, to write off the university attitude as being "airy fairy and not applicable to the real world" as represented by the defense agencies.

"We realize that exchanges with Russia or China have long been an element in a larger political game and that that game will continue, but it is a game that has to be played at a government-to-government level. It would be an error to ask universities to become players in that game by closing down part of their operation in order to protect society from leakage of technological knowledge," he asserted.

Dr. Rosenzweig said he was concerned, not by the Umnov case, but by what he saw as the general direction in which public policy was moving, a generally increasing intervention by the government in the academic community.

Stanford Vice Provost Gerald J. Lieberman warned that the reason the United States had been in the forefront of technological advancement was "the atmosphere of freedom of research in America universities."

If Dr. Umnov or any other visiting scientist was considered an agent of the Soviet KGB, said Dr. Lieberman, then it was up to the State Department to refuse to allow him to enter the country.

"What the government has done is put the universities in the middle of this whole thing," he charged. "Under the scientific exchange program as we see it, there is an implicit assumption that this is a general exchange of unclassified information."

He acknowledged that an accommodation of some kind had to be reached on the current impasse and suggested that a "simplistic solution" would be for the government to classify more of the research material so that there could be no question of its being casually turned over to foreign visitors.

That idea, however, carried problems within it, cautioned Dr. Lieberman. If universities such as Stanford decided to adhere to their current policy of not doing classified research, there could be a serious loss of some of the best scientific minds as far as the technology field was concerned, he pointed out.

Similar concern about governmental interference in academic research was expressed by Dr. Camden A. Coberly, associate dean of the University of Wisconsin, who declared: "There is no way an open university such as ours can effectively enforce the kind of restrictions suggested."

"There are increasing indications from the government that they would like us to be careful about certain kinds of research being released, even if it is not classified, on the basis that such information could be used to improve the military preparedness of other powers," said Dr. Coberly.

He argued that some of those alleged technological secrets were based on work that was already established and known.

"If that background information is of value to us, we have to assume it is of value to other nations so we assume they will make the same use of it, and a free exchange can benefit both sides in terms of technological advance," he said.

But Dr. Ronald Hilton, a professor emeritus at Stanford and editor of *World Affairs Report*, suggested that the universities had exhibited a

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"knee-jerk reaction" to government worries about technological leaks.

As far as Stanford was concerned, he noted, the Bay area was considered extremely sensitive because the renowned Silicon Valley, in Santa Clara county, was a "focal point for Soviet activities in the technological theft field." Dr. Hilton contended that instead of making a "rather violent public issue out of it," the university officials should have taken the matter up quietly with the government.

He pointed out that while the ideals advocated by American colleges were admirable, they were not upheld in the Soviet bloc countries where, as he put it, the scientific insitutions were considered agencies of Russian power politics.

It should be kept in mind by American academics, said Dr. Hilton, that a basic principle of Soviet policy was to use what Lenin had dubbed "useful idiots." He referred to well-meaning American scientists who had been enlisted in international movements with humanitarian aims and then found themselves used by Russian propaganda to indict the United States.

Dr. Hilton's reaction found favor at the Pentagon, where officials in the office of research and engineering stressed the importance now attached to "opening a dialogue" between academia and the federal government on the subject of technological leaks.

Michael Lorenzo, deputy under secretary of defense for international programs and technology, noted that one of the problems was that such a dialogue had been absent since the disenchantment of the academic community with the government that had come about during the Vietnam era.

"That dialogue must be reestablished," he said. "Our basic attitude is that we have to examine the whole issue, hear both sides, and see what we can do to expedite the development of technology and exert reasonable balanced control over what should not be let loose in simple terms of national security."

Dr. Kennedy and Dr. Richard Delauer, under secretary of defense for research and engineering, will be co-chairmen of the new joint committee set up by the Association of American Universities and the Defense Department to study the problem of how to stem technological leaks from universities in a manner that could be accepted by the academic community.

According to Dr. Kennedy, agreement at least had been reached on working with the State Department, the National Academy of Sciences and other agencies "to see if a way can be found to make restrictions acceptable."